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Trinidad and Tobago hosts successful

Fifth Summit of the Americas

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Product of the High Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, London

From the Office of the President

Message from His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards TC, CMT, Ph. D, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on the occasion of Indian Arrival Day, 2009.

Fellow Citizens

In the year 2009, countries all over the world find themselves affected, to a greater or lesser degree, by an economic downturn that has had tremendous negative effect on millions of people. The changes that have been brought about, as a result, have been largely traumatic and those who suffer the most are to be found at the lower end of the economic ladder.

For large segments of the world's population, there is nothing to celebrate and this is understandable. Yet, in the midst of it all, we, in Trinidad and Tobago, although not immune from the distress of loss, in many respects, can find occasion to lift our spirits.

One such occasion is Indian Arrival Day, which we celebrate on 30th May, in recollection of our ancestors who came as indentured labourers and helped to build our country, in spite of the many challenges that they faced.

Acknowledgment of what they achieved, notwithstanding the legion of obstacles, may serve us well as we grapple with present day difficulties. Recollection of what sustained the few hundred men and women who came in 1845 and those who followed, can guide us to an understanding that all of us, of whatever background, can turn around our situation, for the better.

Strong faith and belief in their systems of social interaction kept hope alive and, with discipline and determination, they established themselves, over time, as a group that made a solid contribution to life in this country. This is true, not only of the labour that they gave, but also the culture which they brought and which they nurtured.

There is no question but that the people of East Indian origin have, in many ways, made Trinidad and Tobago the unique country that it is. It is good that many customs have survived and, in this context, I think, for example, of family values that have helped to preserve that very critical unit in society – the family.

I believe that the cohesiveness which, by and large, is still very evident in families is a good example to follow. We can speak of sacrifices that were made by forbears, in the interest of a better life for them, later on, but more so, for future generations.

They inculcated lessons of industriousness that engendered self-reliance and entrepreneurship and which created a solid base for advancement. Above all, leadership of parents in the home, with roles defined and sustained, established order.

Let us therefore, as a national community facing serious economic upheaval and inevitable adjustments, be mindful of how adverse situations were turned into opportunities by a migrant population who had no guarantees except a one way ticket back to their motherland. Let us, on Indian Arrival Day, 2009, celebrate their courage and commit to using such elements of the pattern that they left as a legacy, to secure our advancement into a better future.

I wish you all a happy Indian Arrival Day, 2009 and may God bless our nation.

George Maxwell Richards

Leaders adopt Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain

Above: Heads of state gather for one of the official photo sessions at the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

Affirming their "renewed spirit of cooperation, integration and solidarity," the hemisphere's leaders concluded the Fifth Summit of the Americas having arrived at a consensus to advance joint solutions to address the most pressing challenges facing the region.

With a focus on the theme of the Summit - "Securing Our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability" - the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain outlines key areas in which the countries will work toward common goals.

The 97-paragraph document, which was negotiated by the countries prior to the summit and adopted by consensus, emphasizes fighting poverty and promoting development and social justice, since "deep inequalities continue to exist in our countries and in our region."

Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad and Tobago, Chair of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, signed the Declaration of Commitment on behalf of the region, following a retreat of the Heads of State and Government held at the Diplomatic Centre in Port of Spain.

Acknowledging that the document had not found unanimous support, the Prime Minister said that when 34 countries are negotiating, "no one country is likely to get everything that country requires." The Honourable Prime Minister noted however that the leaders had agreed to adopt it by consensus.

In his remarks at the signing, Prime Minister Manning acknowledged that there was not full and unanimous support for every element in the document. However, the Prime Minister was "extremely pleased" at the outcome of negotiations at the Fifth Summit, adding that the meeting, "has turned out to be a signal example of cooperation and collaboration among the countries of the Western Hemisphere."

The opening sections of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain focus on the three pillars of the theme - human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability - while later sections address ways to strengthen public security, democratic governance and the Summit of the Americas process itself.

The Declaration of Commitment recognises that meeting long-term goals will require tackling short-term economic challenges. "We are committed to addressing the current economic and financial crisis in order to achieve our objectives of promoting human prosperity and securing our citizens' future," the document further states. "We are determined to enhance our cooperation and work together to restore global growth and achieve needed reforms in the world's financial systems."

Human prosperity received much attention in the document. Measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of anti-poverty efforts, promote job creation and prevent exploitation of workers are outlined. It also calls for action to strengthen food security, promote good nutrition

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Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain (continued)

Above: *Prime Minister Patrick Manning signs the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain as the Fifth Summit of the Americas draws to a close.*

and broaden access to health care, particularly for the most vulnerable. Health-related commitments include measures to reduce neonatal mortality, combat both communicable and non-communicable diseases and continue efforts against HIV/AIDS. "We commit to strengthening public policies aimed at reducing the incidence of mother-to-child transmission of HIV to less than 5% by 2015," the document states.

The Declaration lays out a series of education-related goals, among them achieving universal primary education by 2015, a secondary education enrolment rate of 75% by 2010 and a minimum 40% participation in tertiary education by 2020.

Energy security looks at aspects such as energy efficiency and conservation and calls for the development of renewable energy sources and technologies. It notes that energy, "is an essential resource for improving the standard of living of our peoples and that access to energy is of paramount importance to economic growth with equity and social inclusion."

Environmental sustainability, the third pillar of the Fifth Summit theme, is another area in which the region's leaders called for cooperation. The Declaration of Commitment recognises, "the adverse impacts of climate change on all countries of the Hemisphere, in particular, Small Island Developing States, countries with low-lying coastal, arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification, developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems and land-locked countries."

The full text of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain is available on the Fifth Summit of the Americas Web site: www.fifthsummitoftheamericas.org

President Obama says thank you to Prime Minister Manning

The Hon. Patrick Manning, Prime Minister, was paid a farewell courtesy call by U.S. Ambassador, H.E. Charles Shapiro, just two days after the conclusion of the Fifth Summit of the Americas. Mr. Shapiro was on a short-term assignment to Trinidad and Tobago in preparation for the Summit of the Americas.

Mr. Shapiro conveyed to the Prime Minister, President Obama's delight at the reception held in his honour during the Summit. Mr. Shapiro also indicated that the President wanted to thank Prime Minister Manning for affording him the opportunity to meet with all of his hemispheric colleagues at what was a very positive meeting.

The Prime Minister took the opportunity to convey to the President, through Mr. Shapiro, that the spirit of co-operation displayed at the Summit was due in large part to the outlook of President Obama as the United States representative on the team of Heads.

Above: On the steps of the Diplomatic Centre, Port of Spain, Trinidad, President Obama bids farewell to Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

The Prime Minister further expressed his thanks to President Obama for his visit to Trinidad and Tobago so early in his term of office and the hope that he would return to the republic during this administration for a longer visit.

Commonwealth Secretary General commends the Government of Trinidad and Tobago on its successful hosting of the Fifth Summit of the

Secretary General of the Commonwealth H.E. Kamalesh Sharma (pictured) praised Trinidad and Tobago for its successful hosting of the recently concluded Summit of the Americas. Mr. Sharma and a team of officials met with the Prime Minister at his St. Clair offices as part of a visit to Trinidad and Tobago ahead of the November Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

Mr. Sharma and the Prime Minister, who was supported in the discussions by Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, discussed a variety of issues. These included logistical arrangements for the meeting, the format of the proposed meeting and certain security concerns. They also discussed several important matters which will be raised in the November meeting. Among these are the ongoing world financial downturn, its effect on small states and the role of the Commonwealth Secretariat in supporting them through the crisis.

Both parties stated clearly that they were committed to making the Trinidad and Tobago CHOGM one of the most successful meetings held by the Commonwealth group of Nations. Secretary General Sharma pledged his support and the services of the Secretariat to the Prime Minister and Government.

While in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Sharma and his party also held talks with the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders in the summit planning process.

PM makes feature address at Commonwealth Business Forum Launch

The following excerpts were taken from the Feature Address, delivered by the Honourable Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, at the launch of the Commonwealth Business Forum, London , May 21, 2009.

"…Trinidad and Tobago has just completed the very successful hosting of the Fifth Summit of the Americas. The meeting signalled a fresh start in cooperation among the nations of our hemisphere. There was significant enthusiasm among leaders of the region as they articulated real willingness to work together to improve the lives of our peoples. There was also strong commitment to join the rest of the international community to overcome present problems and be better prepared for future challenges.

As current Chair of the Summit process, Trinidad and Tobago will play its part towards capitalizing on this mood for greater partnership. We have therefore decided to invite business delegations from the hemisphere to attend the Commonwealth Business Forum that we launch today. I am sure you recognise what this means. We have in the making, a virtual meeting of world business leaders in Port of Spain in November. This makes the occasion full of even greater possibilities. It is going to be an inspiring environment for all entrepreneurial spirits present.

And it is happening at a time when it is sorely needed. In these recessionary days, we especially need the courage, dynamism and creativity of the private sector. There is no other way to return to anywhere near the level of growth that the world economy experienced before the present crisis. The Commonwealth Business Forum is therefore now more important than ever. It must advance the generation of business activity among member states, so many of which are among the more vulnerable of the world. Sadly, the prospects of these countries have indeed been further dimmed by the present global situation.

The Forum must pursue the intensification of cooperation between governments and the private sector which is absolutely necessary in the face of this unprecedented present challenge. We must further the growing trend of partnership with private enterprise in the achievement of the new and higher levels of productivity in our societies. This must also include those areas previously seen as the sole responsibility of the state.

In Port of Spain therefore, we must utilise the opportunity for productive discussions on Public Private Partnerships (PPP). We must examine how these can be best utilized for the development of our countries. It is obvious that, in these times of a global credit crisis, this mechanism can play a vital role in stimulating growth without governments having to descend too deep into deficit financing. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been commendable in creating formalized networks to link member countries to the huge international private sector funds available for infrastructural and institutional development.

…It is therefore a confident Trinidad and Tobago that will host the Business Forum that we launch today. We look forward to welcoming the approximately 800 business leaders from across the Commonwealth and beyond who will also have a chance to interact with counterparts in our hemisphere. We know that in the conducive environment of our capital city there will be:

- great business networking;
- profound and influential debate on trade issues;
- a tremendous boost of investor confidence; and
- significant prospects for increased investment flows.

As a consequence, come November in Port of Spain, our Business Forum will have the capacity to contribute significantly, not only to a reinvigoration of Commonwealth economies, but also to a global economic revival. Let us therefore move with confidence, commitment and optimism to the realisation of our goals as I look forward to seeing all of you in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Thank you very much; best wishes and May God Bless you all."

Patrick Manning

TDC President guest speaker at May's Nationals Meeting

Representatives of the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Company (TDC) were the special guests at the May 2009 nationals meeting held at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London, on Wednesday 27th May, 2009.

TDC President and Director of Tourism, Mr. Ernest Littles, Marketing Manager, Mr. Jason Baptiste and the Tobago House of Assembly's Ms. Carol Alfred, were on hand to address the impact of the airline passenger duty to the Caribbean – an issue of particular resonance to Trinidad and Tobago nationals residing in the United Kingdom.

Their audience included nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, and representatives of key stakeholders in the tourism industry. Along with being informed on the particulars of the passenger duty, nationals were brought up to date on the TDC's tourism trust.

Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago interest groups in the United Kingdom were advised of the tourism sector's growing importance amidst the Government's efforts to diversify the Trinidad and Tobago economy. Those present at the meeting were keen to share their own ideas as to how best the sector could be further developed in Trinidad and Tobago.

The High Commission was represented by Deputy High Commissioner, Ms. Gail Guy, Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism Attaché, Mr. Ashton Ford and Assistant Attachés, Donald Chambers and Donna Philip-Forde.

Nationals Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of every month unless otherwise advised.

NEXT MEETING:
Wednesday 26th August, 2009
@ 6pm

All nationals of Trinidad and Tobago are welcome.

Above: TDC President Ernest Littles addresses the gathering of nationals at the meeting.

Above: During an engaging question and answer segment, Shabaka Thompson (pictured) of the Carnival Village, was one of the many nationals eager to express their point of view.

What is the air passenger duty (APD):

APD is a duty of excise which is levied on the carriage, from a UK airport, of chargeable passengers on a chargeable aircraft (aircraft that have an authorised take off weight of more than ten tonnes or more than twenty seats for passengers.) It becomes due when the aircraft first takes off on the passenger's flight and is payable by the operator of the aircraft.

There are currently four rates of APD. However, as part of the 2008 Pre-Budget Report, Air Passenger Duty was restructured. Destinations for the APD will now be categorised into **four geographical bands based on the distance from London to the capital city of the destination country/territory** (with the exception of the Russian Federation which is split east and west of the Urals).

Trinidad and Tobago falls into Band C. See table below for more details.

The new bands and the rates of duty for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 are as follows: Please note distances are based on the distance between London and the capital city of the destination country/territory

Band, and approximate distance in miles from	In the lowest class of travel (reduced rate)		In other than the lowest class of travel* (standard rate)	
	2009-2010	2010 -2011	2009-2010	2010-2011
Band A (0-2000 miles)	£11	£12	£22	£24
Band B (2001-4000 miles)	£45	£60	£90	£120
Band C (4001-6000 miles)	£50	£75	£100	£150
Band D (over 6000 miles)	£55	£85	£110	£170

*However, if only one class of travel is available and that class provides for seating in excess of 40" then the standard (rather than the reduced) rate of APD applies.

Current law and proposed revisions:
There are currently four rates of APD as follows:

Passenger Type	In lowest class of travel (reduced rate)	In other than lowest class of travel* (standard rate)
Passengers flying to destinations in the European Economic Area (EEA), the European Common Aviation Area, countries applying to join the EU and Switzerland	£10	£20
Passengers flying to other destinations	£40	£80

*However, if only one class of travel is available and that class provides for seating in excess of 40" then the standard (rather than the reduced) rate of APD applies.

The following is a release by the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago:

Inflation Falls

Left: *Ewart Williams, Central Bank Governor*

Recent data released by the Central Statistical Office indicate that headline inflation, measured by the 12-month increase in the Index of Retail Prices, slowed to 10.3 per cent in May 2009 from 11.9 per cent in the previous month. Food price inflation, the main contributor to headline inflation, measured 19.6 per cent in the twelve months to May compared with 25.2 per cent in April. Core inflation, which filters out the impact of food prices, remained virtually unchanged from the previous month at 5.8 per cent (year-on-year). On a monthly basis, headline inflation fell by 0.2 per cent in May, reversing the upward trend of the previous two months.

As noted above, the reduction in food inflation reflected movements in a wide range of items. It is, however, too early to say whether this reduction marks the start of a trend deriving from structural factors (such as increased production) and the delayed pass-through of international commodity price decreases.

As regards core inflation, the sub-indices for health and alcoholic beverages and tobacco posted year-on-year increases of 7.9 and 7.7 per cent, respectively. The increase in the cost of health services reflected higher prices for pharmaceutical products. The stickiness in the rate of core inflation, which has been hovering in the 5-6 per cent range since the beginning of the year, suggests that underlying inflationary pressures have not yet been fully contained.

Against the background of a more subdued economic climate, there continues to be a steady contraction in bank credit expansion. Of the three major categories of private sector credit, the largest deceleration occurred in consumer lending, with the year-on-year rate slowing markedly to 0.2 per cent in April from 2.0 per cent in the previous month and from around 20 per cent a year earlier.

Meanwhile, the rate of growth of credit to businesses and lending for real estate mortgages slowed to 7.4 per cent and 13.3 per cent, respectively. Net fiscal injections for the first nine months of fiscal year 2009 were approximately 21 per cent higher than in the corresponding period a year earlier. The high level of fiscal injections combined with sluggish credit demand has led to significant excess liquidity in the banking system.

The sharp increase in foreign exchange sales by the Central Bank as well as two bond auctions (a TT$280 million 7-year bond and a TT$600 million 11-year bond) scheduled for June 26, will assist in mopping up some of this excess liquidity.

As noted, the Bank is still uncertain as to whether the significant reduction in inflation is the start of a downward trend. At the same time, there continues to be strong evidence of a slowing in domestic economic activity. Under these circumstances, the Bank has decided to reduce the "Repo" rate by 50 basis points to 7.50 per cent.

The Bank will continue to keep a close watch on domestic, regional and international economic developments and is prepared to take further monetary policy action if circumstances so warrant.

www.central-bank.org.tt

Cultural Commandments
Denmark

by Commercial Attaché

Eye on Trade

The world continues to shrink and ensuring that your company is equipped to deal with the nuances of different cultures is important to success in business. From time to time we feature articles on the 'cultural commandments' of doing business in the countries to which the High Commission is accredited. In this issue, we will look at Denmark.

Much of Denmark's income is derived from quality agricultural and industrial products. In terms of GDP the country is ranked 29th in the world. For those of you interested in doing business in Denmark, the following are some cultural key points of which you should be aware.

Stick to the facts:
Danes are factual people who are more influenced by solid data than emotion. You or your representatives should arrive well-prepared with all the information and proofs relevant to your case or business.

Be prepared for some healthy cynicism:
It is unlikely that wool can be pulled over a Danes' eyes. They are realists and often suspicious of anything too fanciful or idealistic. Their feet tend to be firmly planted on the ground.

Be direct and honest:
There is a general belief that you do not negate a person by negating their opinion, directness and honesty are the best policies.

Use Humour:
Although using humour is cautioned against in other cultures, in Denmark, humour used properly can be the key to acceptance. However, remember to maintain correctness: do not overdo and let yourself go too far.

Be sociable:
Danish people love a good party and are very congenial and convivial hosts. They tend to warm to you if you can join them.

Create a cosy atmosphere:
A key word for understanding Danish culture is ***hygge.*** Although ***hygge*** does not translate directly into any other language, it describes an atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable and relaxed.

Be Flexible:
Danes don't like things to be too rigid, being a little rebellious works well for them. The Danish opinion is that being flexible is more reasonable than sticking too firmly to a pre-determined course.

Don't infringe on other people's rights:
Danish society is democratic and egalitarian – a place where one's civil rights are given prime importance. People expect to be treated equally and with tolerance and respect.

Don't be too materialistic:
Show that you care about welfare and social progress. It is not good to come across as grasping and greedy, especially if this is at the expense of others. Have a social conscience!

Never boast.

Foreign Exchange Rates as at June 30, 2009.

Currency	Counter: Buying	Selling	Notes: Buying
Pound Sterling	10.2111	10.6339	9.7061
US Dollar	6.1487	6.3024	6.0000

Source: Scotiabank Trinidad & Tobago Limited

WTI Cushing Spot Crude Oil Price on July 7, 2009 $64.05 per barrel

The Melting Pot

- A new Social Enterprise launched in Birmingham

Eye on Trade

"I really believe people deserve a second chance. What matters is that young people have the right kind of help. It's all about what you do with the kids before they offend or if they are at risk of reoffending. It's about helping them to find a way to live their lives and feel legitimate. Young people, wherever they come from, are innovative and they are enterprising, but need to know they can be successful."

Justice Williams MBE

The Melting Pot is the brain child of Life Coach Estella Edwards. The organisation seeks to unlock and empower the nascent entrepreneurial talents of women and young people from minority backgrounds including those classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). It aims to build upon the innovative potential of individuals: by promoting enterprising talent, developing and raising aspirations.

Oftentimes individuals simply need support and direction, a role model, someone who believes in them in spite of what society or anyone believes. On June 22, 2009 the Melting Pot social enterprise was launched in Birmingham. Commercial Attaché, Dionne Ligoure was invited to deliver the feature address on the topic of the role of enterprise in the economy.

The launch was attended by several well respected personalities and business people including: Donald Brown – sculptor, Justice Williams MBE – entrepreneur and Bishop J.D. Aldred – Secretary for Minority Ethnic Christian Affairs. The speakers came from a range of backgrounds and spoke to several areas relevant to the ethos of the Melting Pot.

Continues on next page.

The Melting Pot Services:

The Melting Pot will house or provide the following services in their pilot programme:

- The Melting Pot Network Forum (TMPNF) for young entrepreneurs and women to network, share their opinions and concerns
- A business incubation programme which includes the provision of premises for business start ups
- Develop and manage a peer learning and mentoring programme after the first cohort have been through The Melting Pot's business incubation programme
- Facilitate regular collaborative opportunities for young people to showcase their skills and creativity. This would involve sponsoring talent shows, events and enterprise exhibitions.
- Sourcing and managing funds on behalf of members of the forum from different group giving bodies, private businesses, Trusts and the government.
- Design and delivery of bespoke personal and business development training – with a particular focus on soft skills, business ethics and etiquette
- Develop and manage a peer learning and mentoring programme after the first cohort have been through The Melting Pot's business incubation programme
- Creating a learning environment (resource centre) for enquiring about funding, procurement and networking opportunities.

The Melting Pot *(continued)*

In her delivery, the Commercial Attaché highlighted the fact that entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of 'vision, change and creation, which requires an application of energy and passion towards the creation and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions'. She provided several examples of Birmingham and Trinidad and Tobago based entrepreneurs who successfully applied these principles. Among the essential ingredients required when engaging in enterprise, Ms. Ligoure identified:

- The willingness to take calculated risks--in terms of time, equity, or career;
- The creative skill to marshal needed resources;
- The fundamental skill of building a solid business plan; and
- The vision to reorganise opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion.

She further indicated that enterprise is more than the creation of business, stating that: 'Although the creation of business is certainly an important facet, it is not the complete picture. The characteristics of seeking opportunities, taking risks beyond security, and having the tenacity to push an idea through to reality combine into a special perspective that permeates entrepreneurs. An "entrepreneurial perspective" can be developed in individuals. This perspective can be exhibited inside or outside an organization, in profit or not-for-profit enterprises, and in business or non business activities for the purpose of bringing forth creative ideas. Thus, entrepreneurship is an integrated concept. It is this perspective that has revolutionized the way business is conducted at every level and in every country, including Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom'.

Other speakers on the programme shared their real life experiences from the gang torn streets of Birmingham.

Above: *TTHC's Commercial Attaché delivers the feature address.*

Speaking passionately about how they were able to turn their lives around when provided with positive support and mentoring.

One such speaker, Justice Williams MBE spoke about how her life has changed beyond recognition. Ten years ago, she was 17 and on the cusp of a life in and out of the criminal justice system. She went on to set up her own social enterprise focused on disadvantaged youngsters in Birmingham who are caught up in gang culture or at risk of going to prison.

Justice Williams is now the managing director of Inner City Creative Media Group (ICCMG), a social enterprise she founded in 2006 training young people between 17 and 26 in media and business skills. After a difficult early start looking for funding, she feels she has established a space "where youngsters feel safe and valued". In June 2009, she was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

High Commission welcomes Deputy High Commissioner Ms. Gail Guy

The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London, welcomes its new Deputy High Commissioner/Ag. High Commissioner, Ms. Gail Guy. Ms. Guy assumed duty as the Deputy High Commissioner on March 26, 2009, and given the recent appointment of the Honourable John Jeremie as the new Attorney General, Ms. Guy currently serves as Acting High Commissioner.

Background: Has been with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since August 1980; Energy Desk Officer at Headquarters (HQ), 1992—1994; Deputy Director Administration Division (HQ), 1994 - 1996; Deputy Counsel General, New York, 1996 - 2003; Deputy High Commissioner, Abuja, Nigeria, 2003 - 2005; Chief of Protocol (HQ), 2005 - 2006; Director, Africa, Asia, Middle East and Pacific Division (HQ), 2006; and Deputy Permanent representative to the United Nations, New York, 2007 - 2009.

Former Deputy High Commissioner, Victoria Farley, has returned to Trinidad and Tobago to continue her service at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Port of Spain.

Trinidad and Tobago talents in full bloom at Chelsea

The Trinidad and Tobago Horticultural Society received a Silver Guild at the Chelsea Flower Show for their 2009 display – *Somewhere over the Rainbow*.

The result may have fallen short of the thirteenth Gold for which the Society was aiming but by all accounts, Trinidad and Tobago did not disappoint. Fans, horticulturalists and general enthusiasts were again treated to a vibrant, expertly crafted exhibition. Their 2009 display did justice to the stellar reputation that the Society has built up over the years, owing to their now customary, stunning displays.

Article and photos by
Assistant Attaché -
Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism

Above: President of the Trinidad and Tobago Horticultural Society and designer of the Chelsea exhibition, Joan Wilson (at right) explains the concept of the display to Ag. High Commissioner, Ms. Gail Guy of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission.

Somewhere over the Rainbow, the brainchild of President of the Horticultural Society and Chief Designer, Joan Wilson, was a physical manifestation of the metaphor 'light at the end of the tunnel.' According to Wilson, the design attempted to highlight that hope and bright opportunities could be found even against the backdrop of harsh times. This was achieved through a mixture of dried plant material, lush foliage and an expanse of colourful blooms.

As if promised a pot of gold, onlookers were drawn to the 'Rainbow' display en masse. Amongst the admirers were many noted celebrities, including the BBC's Chris Bradshaw who, along with his BBC film crew, visited the display for the second year running.

Above: A view of 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'.

New to the exhibition however, was the High Commission's recently appointed Acting High Commissioner, Ms. Gail Guy, who, after being shown around the booth by designer Wilson, was quick to express her appreciation of the talent on display. "The work of the Horticultural Society is not unknown to me. I have seen some of their beautiful arrangements at home in Trinidad and Tobago. However, I must say, to see that our country is being so beautifully and masterfully represented on foreign soil, and at this prestigious event, makes this particular exhibition all the more special," said Ms. Guy.

'Suckle'
A Poet's Story

Above: Poet, Roger Robinson.

A new collection of poems published this summer by Waterways Books, *Suckle,* is a vivid and poignant homage to the author's formative years, memories and experiences.

Roger Robinson's autobiographical work moves evocatively through a wide range of moods and moments with deft lyricism and humour. Failed attempts at Hip Hop dance moves as a youth bring humour whereas the relationships between fathers and sons, provide a solemn touch. His atmospheric glances at Caribbean spiritualism and the plight of Caribbean women, reflect the author's unique viewpoint. The rhythm, sass, and self-deprecating wit that his work is known for have earned Robinson an international following and multiple accolades.

A striking feature of the narrative is gender ambiguity. The voice throughout can appear remarkably feminine - unusual for Caribbean male writing. Robinson called the book Suckle because *"It felt maternal, almost feminine in a way".* This collection serves as a personal and vibrant education in the cultural appreciation of an island's history, in Robinson's case, the island of Trinidad. Poems are gregarious and socially conscious as they dissect, intersect, embrace, and reject traditional Caribbean and postcolonial literature. The narrative, rooted in the poetics of Robert Hayden, Kwame Dawes and Li Young Lee, elevates the story; weaving and reworking beginnings with ends, Robinson's ongoing wish is for his poems to entertain and enlighten his reader, in all senses of those, and his own words.

Some pieces evoke a master storyteller around a beach fire or some similar ethereal location. A typical observation appears in the poem *Sole*: '*Using an old dishrag to wipe away the dust,/he'd open the first kiwi polish with a twist/and it's earthy wet smell would fill the room./He'd say that a man's shoes would tell his story'*

Writer / performer Roger Robinson was born in Trinidad arriving in the UK in the late 80s. He has preformed his work internationally and is an experienced workshop leader and lecturer on poetry and theatre. He was chosen by Decibel as one of 50 writers who have influenced black-British writing over the past 50 years and has received commissions from Theatre Royal Stratford East, The National Trust, London Open House and the National Portrait Gallery. Robinson has toured extensively with the British Council, travelling to Vietnam, Philippines, Argentina, Bulgaria, Greece, India, the Czech Republic and Mozambique. In 2007 he received a Grants For The Arts Award from Arts Council England.

Published work includes a book of short fiction: Adventures in 3D (2001), and a poetry collection, Suitcase (2004). Roger Robinson is currently an associate artist of Stratford Theatre Royal East and writer in residence for the Northampton Cultural and Literary Festival. He is also the writing coach for Spoke Lab, a poetry theatre initiative. Roger is one half of the critically acclaimed music duo King Midas Sound alongside Kevin Martin, the album Super Heavy is soon out on Hyperdub Records.

Roger Robinson's Suckle is available from late July 2009 and is accompanied by a national reading tour. For more information go to: www.rogerrobinsonbooks.com

A Noir Affair

by Assistant Attaché - Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism
with photos by kevin@responsephotographic.com

Trinidad Noir, a collection of bold, noir fiction in the short story mode, was successfully launched at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission on April 16, 2009.

A star-studded audience, including France and Arsenal football star, Mikael Sylvestre, veteran television actor, Rudolph Walker, supermodel Lorraine Pascal, and a host of other well-known personalities and acclaimed authors, was eager to digest the Trinbagonian spin on the popular genre. Many of the guests were first-time visitors to the High Commission but as one guest pointed out, the Mission was easy to identify.

On the pavement adjacent to 42 Belgrave Square stood a towering Trinidad and Tobago flag-waving Moko Jumbie, greeting guests and curious passers-by in true 'Trini' fashion. Above him, through the open windows of the Mission's reception room, the live steelpan of Ebony came sneaking out. The music, not loud enough to disturb the neighbours, but just enough to lead the entrants up the stairs where members of the Hassan catering group were ready with glasses of 'Piero Noir', a drink specially concocted for the occasion.

Drinks in hand, guests were free to roam the room, beautifully decorated by the works of Boscoe Holder and Leroy Clerke, courtesy Wendel Clement and Campbell's Art Gallery. The paintings, on either side of the room, led guests to the centre table where copies of Trinidad Noir were on display. By this point, those in attendance were left without any doubt - they had arrived on the property of Trinidad and Tobago and a fantastic evening was in the offing.

As the formal part of proceedings took shape, Public Affairs Attaché, Ashton Ford welcomed all and took the opportunity to introduce Ms. Gail Guy, the newly appointed Deputy High Commissioner at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission. Ms. Guy commended those responsible for the production of the book, Trinidad and Tobago's first attempt at noir fiction, and praised the efforts of those whose efforts made the evening possible.

Satya Crystal, chief organiser of the event was pleased with the numbers and enthusiasm of the turnout. So too Lisa Allen Agostini, co-editor of Trinidad Noir. Agostini and contributing author Vahni Capildeo, teased with excerpts from the book and the audience responded - what was a full display table (pictured) at the beginning of the evening, awash with copies of the book, was a bare table top by night's end.

A good evening was had by all.

The High Commission wishes to thank Angostura Ltd who provided the 1919 Rum that was used in the signature cocktail 'Piero Noir'.

Top right: *Guests hone in to purchase copies of the popular book.*
Centre: *Deputy High Commissioner Gail Guy addresses the gathering.*
Right: *Co-editor Lisa Allen Agostini with Attaché Ashton Ford.*

TTHC honours Andrew Ramroop OBE

A special event was recently held at the TTHC to commemorate the achievements of acclaimed tailor and entrepreneur, Professor Andrew Ramroop OBE CMG.

Ramroop, 57, a tailor since 1970, has been awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Members of his family, dignitaries, friends and well-wishers were present at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission on an evening where a prominent and decidedly successful son of the soil was honoured.

"Professor Andrew Ramroop has achieved an iconic status throughout the United Kingdom for his achievements and contributions to the social, cultural and artistic development of many," said then High Commissioner John Jeremie. He continued: "He (Andrew) is clearly a self-made man, driven by ambition and the goal to succeed. And he has clearly succeeded."

Among Andrew Ramroop's many achievements:

- First black person to own a business on the ultra-exclusive Savile Row – bespoke tailors Maurice Sedwell;
- Made several suits for Princess Diana, including the midnight blue £1,800 jacket that she wore for the now infamous Martin Bashir interview in November, 1995.
- The first tailor to be made a Visiting Professor of the London Institute; and
- Has started an academy for aspiring tailors.

Professor Andrew Ramroop OBE CMG.

Above (from left): *Mrs. Oma Ramroop, the Hon. John Jeremie, Mr. Rudolph Walker, Mrs. Duonne Walker and Professor Ramroop.* *For more pictures, please see page 19.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
AT ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD

JOB VACANCIES

SENIOR LECTURER/LECTURER IN GENERAL SURGERY
Department: Clinical Surgical Sciences
Faculty: Medical Sciences
Deadline Date: Friday, August 14, 2009

SENIOR LECTURER/LECTURER IN SURGERY (ANAESTHESIA AND INTENSIVE CARE)
Department: Clinical Surgical Sciences
Faculty: Medical Sciences
Deadline Date: Friday, August 14, 2009

LECTURER IN SURVEYING & LAND INFORMATION
Department: Surveying & Land Information
Faculty: Engineering
Deadline Date: Thursday, August 27, 2009

PLANNING OFFICER
Department: Office of Planning & Development
Centre (Mona) Campus
Deadline Date: Friday, September 11, 2009

DIRECTOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING AND DELIVERY DIVISION
Centre (Mona) Campus
Deadline Date: Friday, September 11, 2009

DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
Centre (Mona) Campus
Deadline Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2009

U.W.I. Application procedure

Complete two copies of the application form provided and submit with the application form, your full particulars of qualifications, experience, date of birth, marital status and addresses of three (3) referees (one of whom should be from your current organisation).

This information should be forwarded to:

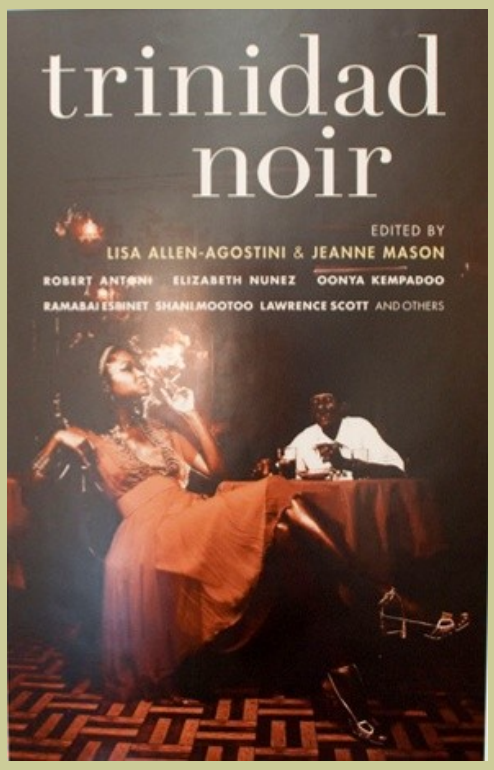
The Campus Registrar
The University of the West Indies
St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago, W.I.
Fax: 1 868 663 9684
Email: appts@admin.uwi.tt

Particulars of advertised posts and application forms are available at the above address and at http://www.uwi.tt. In order to expedite the appointments procedure, applicants are advised to ask their referees to send references under **confidential** cover **directly** to the Campus Registrar at the above address.

Focus on the Mission

Luncheon to honour retiring Lt. Col. Sharon Alfonso Farrell: *Members of staff gathered to say farewell to their colleague of four years, Lt. Col. Alfonso Farrell. The Colonel's mother (pictured) was also in attendance at the event at the TTHC.*
Above right: *Assistant Attaché Beverly Awonaya was one of many staff members to pay glowing tributes to their departing colleague. The High Commission wishes the Lt. Col. all the best with her future endeavours. Photos by Donald Chambers.*

Focus on the Mission



Above and clockwise: *Cover of the book Trinidad Noir; Guests at the book launch at the TTHC; Guest Dexter Webb is happy to stand with footballer Mikael Sylvestre; Writer Vahni Capildeo reads a bit from her story; Chief organiser Satya Crystal addresses the audience.*
Photos by kevin@responsephotographic.com

From left: *Honoured guest Andrew Ramroop joins in applauding calypsonian, Tobago Crusoe, as he performs at the TTHC. The Ramroop family turned out to support Andrew at the event honouring his achievements.*
Photos by Donald Chambers.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HIGH COMMISSION & NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
AUGUST - OCTOBER 2009

Sunday 9th August - Trinidad and Tobago Students Association Picnic

22nd - 23rd August - Grand Carnival Costume Splash

Wednesday 26th August - Nationals Meeting

Friday 28th August - Evensong at Westminster Abbey

Sunday 30th - Monday 31st August - Notting Hill Carnival

Sunday 6th September - Independence Church Service

Wednesday 30th September - Nationals Meeting

Monday 5th October - Trinidad and Tobago Race Day (Pontefract)

Wednesday 28th October - Nationals Meeting

Please note change of address for this year's Independence Church Service - All Saints Church, Clydesdale Road, London W11 1JE. For more information please contact the Public Affairs Department at 020 7201 9686.

High Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

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